

JANE'S
FATHER

by Dorothy Aldis



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JANE'S FATHER

BY DOROTHY ALDIS

EVERYTHING AND ANYTHING
HERE, THERE AND EVERYWHERE
JANE'S FATHER



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by Dorothy Aldis

with
drawings by
Margaret
Freeman

MINTON, BALCH and COMPANY
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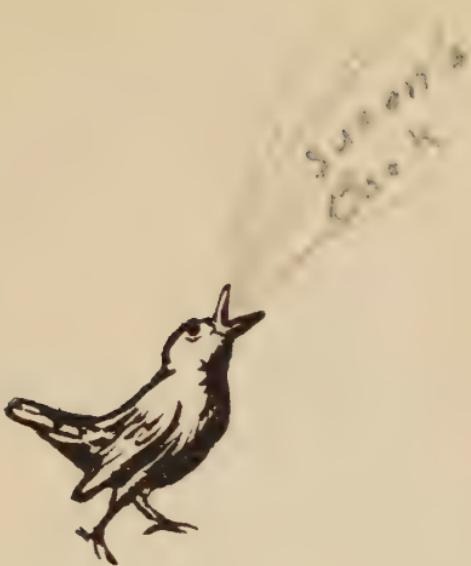
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BY DOROTHY ALDIS

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TO
JANE'S FATHER

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THE WOBBLE CURE



THE WOBBLE CURE

IT was Sunday and Jane was coming down the stairs a special way, three steps walking and two steps sitting down, when somebody said—“Twop!”

Jane knew who *that* was. It was her father.

Jane's father was a very funny kind of man. He looked like other fathers. He wore long trousers and he had a watch in his pocket and he could reach things better than anybody else in the house because he was so tall. And he went down town for business every day and came home at night just in time to read aloud to Jane before she went to bed. And he knew how to play golf and tennis and carry people on top of his shoulders. He was just like anybody's father except he was so funny.

“Twop,” said Jane's father, “you might twumble.”

“Oh, father,”—Jane sat down on one of the steps—“not *twop*—STOP.”

"Anyway," said Jane's father, "if you hurt yourself remember I twold you." And he went into the library to read his papers.

In a few minutes Jane heard him calling.

"My head," he cried, "my head, my head."

Jane thought she knew what the matter was and ran just as fast as she could into the library. Yes, she was right. Her father was sitting in his big chair holding the paper in front of him and when Jane looked behind the paper she saw that he was having trouble with his head again.

Jane's father's head looked like other fathers' heads. It had a little hair on it; it nodded when Jane was a good girl and shook when Jane was a bad girl; but it did very funny things when he was reading. It was doing them now: it was wobbeling round and round on his neck like a ball, and he couldn't hold it up straight to read his paper.

"My head, my head," he said.

"Wait, father, I'll help you," said Jane. And she climbed up on his lap and held his head straight with both her hands. "There you are, that's better, isn't it?"

"Much better," said her father. "Thank you, Jane."

"Do you think it will stay straight now?" asked Jane after a few minutes.

"Let's see," said her father.

So Jane let go. She and her father sat very quietly for about a minute waiting to see what would happen. Then, just as they both thought Jane would be able to go back to playing her game on the stairs, Woops—it rolled right round again and hung over on one side.



"Mother," called Jane, "father's head is wobbling again. Come here and help me."

"Goodness," called Jane's mother, "I'm coming right away."

"See," Jane said, when her mother ran in to the room, "see, the minute I let go it starts wobbling again."

"Its twerrible," said Jane's father.

"Dear me, I do wish we could think of some way of fixing it for good," said Jane's mother.

"It's beginning again," said Jane's father. "Won't you please hold it?"

So Jane and her mother held it while they all three tried to think of some way to keep it from wobbeling.

"I know," said Jane's mother.

"What?" asked Jane and her father.

"Why, we'll tie his head tight to the back of his chair with a piece of string. Wouldn't that hold it still?"

"No, mother," said Jane, "that isn't a very good idea, because the minute his head started wobbeling hard it would break the string."

"Yes," she said. Jane's mother sighed. "I guess you're right. I guess there isn't anything we can do about it." She looked very sad.

Then suddenly Jane's father's head stopped wobbeling and he was able to hold it up all by himself. That's the way it always was: one minute he couldn't hold his head up by himself and it went wobbeling round and round, and the next minute he was all right and went on reading his paper.

"You're all right now, father," said Jane. "Call us again if you need us." And she and her mother left him sitting in his chair.

Just as they got out in the hall Jane said she had an idea.

"Oh, what?" asked Jane's mother.

"A bird cage," whispered Jane. "Wouldn't it help if we put his head inside a bird cage while he was reading? Wouldn't that hold it still?"



"Why, Jane," whispered her mother, "that's a very good idea. I'll buy one to-morrow. It certainly should keep his head still, and he'll be able to read quite nicely through the bars. If ever he can't see a word then you and I will help him. That will take lots less time than running to him every few minutes to keep his head from wobbling."

Jane was glad that she'd had such a good idea. Instead of going back to her game on the stairs she went skipping out to see William in the garden.

"William," she said, "you know how funny my father is."

"Well," said William, "is he?"

"Oh yes, he's such a funny man, William. He can't say STOP like other fathers. He always says TWOP. And he eats eggs-in-a-mess instead of just eggs the way other fathers do. And when he's reading his paper sometimes his head starts wobbling, and mother and I have to help him hold it still. Don't you think that's funny, William?"

"Well," said William slowly, "I don't know."

"It is funny, William. And do you know what mother and I are going to do? We're going to get a bird cage and put it on his head while he's reading. Don't you think that's a good idea?"

"Well," said William, "why?"

"So it will keep his head from wobbling. Don't you see?"

William didn't say anything. He just went on raking the gravel for quite a long time. He raked very slowly, the way he talked, but he didn't miss any of the stones. Jane stood there watching him. She was thinking if she had a little toy rake she could help William and that would be fun.



At last William spoke. "Well," he said, "when are you going to put the bird cage on him?"

"Tomorrow," said Jane. "At least mother's buying it tomorrow, and we're going to put it on him the next time he wobbles."

"Have you thought of one thing though?" William shook out some big stones that had got stuck in the rake's teeth.

"What?" asked Jane.

"Well, that if he has a bird cage on his head maybe he'll start singing."

"Oh," said Jane.

"Birds always sing in a cage, you know," said William.

"Yes, they do," said Jane, "but I don't think my father knows how to sing."

"Well, wouldn't that make it all the worse?" asked William.

"Oh," said Jane again. "Oh."

William went on raking. He made swirly lines in the gravel with his rake that looked like little rivers.

"There is a way, though," he said after a long time, while Jane was standing there looking at him and wishing she had a little toy rake to make some swirls with too, "there is a way of stopping a bird singing when you don't want him to sing."

"How?" asked Jane.

"Well, it's very easy," said William. "All you do is throw a dark cloth over the cage. That stops them right away because then they think it's night again, and time to go to sleep."

"Oh," said Jane.

The next afternoon Jane's mother brought back the bird cage. It was a beautiful bird cage with everything inside it: a little swing, and a little food box, and a darling little white bath tub. But Jane and her mother had to take all of them out so there would be room for Jane's father's head. Then they put the cage on the library table. Jane told her mother what William had said about the singing; so they found a black cloth and had that ready too. Then they sat down and waited.

At half past five Jane's father came home. First he kissed Jane and her mother. Then he walked around the place with William to see how everything was growing. Then he took a bath and put on some white flannel trousers. Then he sat down in his chair. And then, after he had talked to Jane's mother for a little while, he took up his paper.

Jane and her mother looked at each other.

Was it going to happen?

It did. In a few minutes he called to Jane from behind his paper.



"Jane," he said, "my head. Please help me twop it."

"Oh, father," Jane said. And she ran and climbed up in his lap.

"You hold it still," said Jane's mother, "and I'll slip on the bird cage."

So Jane held her father's head still while her mother slipped on the bird cage.

"There," said Jane's mother. "Now let's see if it works."

They both sat very still and watched Jane's father's head inside the bird cage. It didn't wobble one bit!

"See what a good idea the bird cage was!" cried Jane. "Your head doesn't wobble one bit, father. Isn't that nice?"

"No," said Jane's father.

"Why not?" asked Jane. "I should think you'd



like having your head stay nice and still like other fathers' heads."

"I don't," said Jane's father. "I'd rather have it wobble. This bird cage isn't comfortable at all."

"Oh yes, it is." Jane's mother patted him on the shoulder. "You'll get used to it—you'll see."

"No, I won't," said Jane's father. "Please take it off."

"No," said Jane and her mother, "you have to keep it on." And they went over and sat across the room on the sofa where they could watch him read.

He read through the bars for a little while and his head was just as straight as anything. Jane and her mother smiled at each other for being so clever. Then suddenly he seemed to have an idea . . .

"La, la—La, looloo la," he went.

"What are you doing?" asked Jane's mother. It was a very funny noise.

"Loo, loo—loo, lala loo," he went again, very loudly this time.

"What's the matter, father?" asked Jane.

"I'm singing," said Jane's father. "Can't you hear?" And he did it again so loudly that Jane and her mother had to put their hands over their ears. Then they remembered about the black cloth.

"Quickly, Jane," said her mother.

And Jane threw the black cloth over the cage. But it didn't stop the noise at all—it made it worse.

"Hey," cried Jane's father, "take this off and I won't ever wobble again."

"Are you cured of wobbeling?" asked Jane's mother.

"Oh yes," said Jane's father.

"Are you sure you're cured, father?" asked Jane.

"Yes, I tell you," he almost shouted.

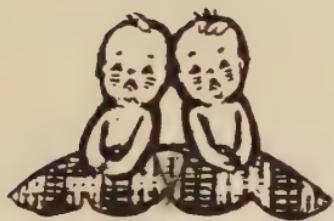
So they took it off him. First they took off the black cloth and then they took off the bird cage. Jane's father's face was very red when it came off and he had lost a little hair inside the bars.

"There," said Jane. "There you are, father. Now don't wobble any more."

And Jane's father never did. He did lots of

other funny things, but he never wobbled again. And the next night he brought home a little yellow canary to put in the bird cage.





TELLING THE TWINS APART



TELLING THE TWINS APART

ONE day in April Jane and her mother and father had twins. They were all so surprised. "Goodness," Jane said, "we never thought we'd have twins, did we?"

"No," said Jane's father, "we didn't."

"Two babies," said Jane.

"Yes. Two," said her father.

"It will take a great many safety pins," said Jane's mother and she closed her eyes.

Jane and her father stood looking at the twins. They both had blue eyes and pink cheeks, and they both had round noses and round chins, and they both had no hair. Jane's mother opened her eyes and looked at them too.

"Well, Jane," she said, "you and your father will have to figure it out between you how to tell them apart. I'm too tired," she said, and closed her eyes again.

So Jane and her father wheeled the twins into another room and sat down to talk about it. First

Jane's father turned his head away, and Jane gave him a twin and he guessed wrong, and then Jane turned her head away and her father gave her a twin and she guessed wrong. It was very discouraging.

"Jane," said Jane's father, "we must think."

"Yes," said Jane.

Just then William came into the room with some wood for the fireplace.

"William," Jane's father said, "Jane and I are sitting here thinking how to tell the twins apart. Maybe you can help us."

So William put down his wood and went over to look at the twins. He wiped one of his fingers off on his trouser legs and then stuck it under each twin's chin.

"Well," he said, after he had looked at them both for a long long time,—"well—why do you have to tell them apart?"

"Why?" asked Jane's father, surprised.

"Is there a reason?" asked William.

"Oh," said Jane's father, "that's an idea, William. Is there a reason why we have to tell them apart, Jane?"

Jane thought hard.

"No," she said finally, "I can't think of any, can you?"

"I can't either," said Jane's father.

"Well then, you see there really isn't any," said

William. And he started crumpling up some paper for his fire.

"Why, that's splendid then. Now let's see. Their names are Mary and Ann, so we'll just think of them as one baby and call it Mary Ann. One baby," Jane's father went on, "is what I rather looked for anyway."

"But, father," said Jane, "when one is crying and the other isn't then would you say that *Mary Ann* was crying? I don't think that would be fair when one was being good."

"Well," said William, "all you'd have to do is wait a minute and then the other'd start a hollerin' too."

"William, I believe you're right," said Jane's father. "Now, Jane, you run and tell your mother to stop worrying because we've decided it isn't really necessary to tell the twins apart."

"All right," said Jane, and ran and told her mother.

Thinking of them as one baby seemed to work very nicely for several months. And then one afternoon Jane's father came home and saw the doctor's car at the front door.

"What's the matter?" he called from the foot of the stairs. "Is anybody sick?"

Jane's mother leaned over the banisters in her green wrapper.

"No," she said. "But one of the twins is starved."

"What do you mean, starved?" asked Jane's father, running up the stairs as fast as he could.



"Maybe you remember," said Jane's mother, "that you and Jane and William decided it wouldn't be necessary to tell the twins apart."

"Yes," said Jane's father.

"Well," said Jane's mother, "Mary has been getting a great deal of Ann's orange juice, and some of her bottles, and most of her cod liver oil."

"Oh," said Jane's father, "how awful!"

"Yes," said Jane's mother.

"Where's Jane?" asked her father.

"Jane and William are out in the woodshed trying to think of some way to tell the twins apart, because the doctor says this must never happen again. It's very dangerous." Jane's mother shook her head.

"I should think so," said Jane's father. And he rushed into the room to look at the twins.

One twin was lying in her crib very fat and contented with milk running out of her mouth.

"That's Mary, I suppose," thought Jane's father, "with Ann's milk running out of her mouth."

Ann was crying while the doctor felt her tummy.

"Nothing in it," he was saying, "nothing in it at all."

It was such a poor squeezed looking little tummy that Jane's father didn't like to look at it. He closed his eyes.

"Will she be all right, doctor?" he asked with his eyes still shut.

"Certainly," said the doctor, "as soon as you can figure out which twin you've fed and which twin you haven't fed."

The twins' nurse was sitting in the corner cry-

ing quietly. Jane's father went over and patted her on the shoulder.

"There, there," he said.

"Oh," she sobbed, "whatever shall I do? I can't tell which mouth I've stuck a bottle into, and then I go and stick another bottle in the same mouth."

"There, there," said Jane's father, "William and Jane are out in the woodshed right now thinking of what's the best way to tell them apart. So don't you worry any more. Dry your tears," he said.

"Yes and come and give Ann a great big bottle quickly," said the doctor.

So nurse ran out of the room to get Ann's bottle, and Jane's father went to find Jane and William. He found them sitting in the woodshed.

"Have you thought of anything?" he asked.

"Well," said William, "no."

"Oh, dear," said Jane's father, "I'm afraid we can't any of us go home until we've thought of something."

"Not for supper?" asked Jane.

"Well, you see, Ann missed several suppers," explained her father, "and everybody seemed quite cross about it, didn't they?"

They all sat down in a row then; first William on a bench, and next to William Jane's father, and

next to Jane's father Jane upon a turned-up flower-pot.

"Oh dear!" said Jane, after quite a long time. It looked nice and green outdoors, and it was hot in the woodshed thinking.

They thought and they thought. William got up and walked up and down the woodshed scratching his head; and then Jane's father walked up and down the woodshed snapping his fingers; and then Jane walked up and down the woodshed holding her tummy because she was getting hungrier and hungrier. Finally they heard cook calling.

"SuuUUPper," she called.

Jane stuck her head out of the woodshed window and looked across the garden to the house.

"Do you suppose we could go?" she asked. "She said supper."





"I know," said Jane's father, "let's try."

So Jane and her father walked back under the apple trees, but William stayed on in the shed thinking.

"Hello," said Jane's mother very cheerfully when Jane and her father came into the dining room holding on to each other's hands. "Guess what's happened."

"What?" they asked.

"Mary has a *tooth*!"

"A *tooth*!" they cried.

"Yes," she said. "So all our troubles are over. All we have to do is look inside one mouth and then we'll know it either is or isn't Mary's."

"Jane, you run and tell William right away," said Jane's father.

Jane started telling him when she was still a long way off.

"William," she shouted, "you don't have to think any more because Mary has a *tooth*, so now we can tell them apart."

"Well!" said William. He smiled slowly, and then very very slowly he stopped thinking.

They had a nice supper—chops and spinach and baked potatoes. And all the time they were eating it Jane and her mother and father talked about Mary's tooth. They had none of them ever seen such a beautiful tooth. But while they were eating their dessert, which was apple pudding, the twins' nurse came rushing into the room with tears on both cheeks.

"Why, nurse, whatever is the matter?" asked Jane's father dropping his napkin.

"Ann has one ~~tooth~~ ^{booo}," said the twins' nurse. And she sat plump down on a chair so she could cry better.





THE PICNIC



THE PICNIC

IN the summer time Jane, and her mother and father, and the twins, and the twins' nurse, and cook, went to the farm to have a good time. There were pigs on the farm, and cows, and kittens just-born-in-the-hay, and puppies just-born-under-the-porch, and cherry trees and apple trees and no postman ringing the bell in his blue suit—only a tin box at the end of the drive to put letters in; and a pony; and a pony cart.

The pony and the cart had been there a long time—they were quite old. But the pony still trotted very nicely and the cart rolled along on its two big wheels wherever the pony went.

One day Jane's father said: "Let's go on a picnic."

"In the pony cart!" cried Jane.

"You and your mother and me in the pony cart?" asked Jane's father.

"Oh yes," said Jane. "That wouldn't be too heavy; we could let Clover walk whenever he felt like walking." Clover was the pony's name.

"All right," said Jane's father. "You go and ask cook to please make us three peanut butter sandwiches and three lettuce sandwiches and three jelly sandwiches, and then we'll go."

So Jane did.

"Would you like some apples too?" asked cook, wiping her hands on her apron.

"Oh yes," said Jane.

"And some cake too?" asked cook.

"Oh yes," said Jane. And she ran off to ask William if he would please harness Clover.

"Sure," said William.

Clover was standing in his stall eating. He was so fat that one side of his tummy touched one side of his stall and the other side of his tummy touched the other side of his stall.

"Well," said William, "come on, Clover, you're going on a picnic."

Clover didn't care. He let William lead him out of his stall and stood very quietly with some hay in his mouth while William dusted him off, and put the harness on, and fastened him to the pony cart with the traces. Clover didn't care whether he was going on a picnic or not.

Jane ran into the house to get a lump of sugar for him.

"Clover's ready," she shouted.

In a minute they all came out. Cook came out

with the picnic basket. And the twins' nurse came out with the twins. And they all stood and watched Jane and her mother and father get into the pony cart with the picnic basket. Jane's father said he would drive.



"Well," said William, as Jane's father took up the reins, "I hope you're feeling pretty strong this afternoon."

Now Jane's father had never driven Clover before. So he just smiled when William said that about feeling strong. And he waved his whip at cook and the twins and the twins' nurse and William. And off they went.

It was a lovely day; and Jane and her mother and father were very glad that they had decided to go on a picnic.

For a while Clover walked up the hills and

trotted down the hills, stopping now and then to snatch some juicy grass or heads of buttercups. And Jane and her father and mother talked about all the things that they were seeing—birds and flowers and puddles and clouds and chipmunks that ran across the road. They were having a beautiful time. When suddenly something happened. A dog ran out from behind a fence and barked at Clover's heels.

Clover didn't like it. He jumped way over to one side of the road, and then he started running.

He ran right up a hill without stopping and down the other side, and then up another hill and down the other side.

"Don't you think," said Jane's mother, "that we're going a little fast?"

"Oh no," said Jane's father.



"Oh, father, my hat," cried Jane.

For her hat had blown right off her head and was lying in the yellow dust, way back on the road.

"Jane's hat," cried her mother. "We'll have to stop and pick up Jane's hat."

"Oh no," said Jane's father.

"Stop," cried Jane's mother.

"Stop," shouted Jane.

"Can't you see," said Jane's father, "can't you see that I can't?"

It was true. Clover was so strong that no matter how hard Jane's father pulled on the reins he wouldn't stop. He ran and he ran and he ran.

"Whoa," roared Jane's father. And "TWOP," roared Jane's father. But it didn't do any good. Up the hills they went and down the hills they



went—trop-trop, trop-trop. Jane was crying about her lost hat and Jane's mother was telling Jane's father what to do and Jane's father was shouting at Jane's mother why he couldn't do it. It was dreadful.

And then something else happened. The floor of the pony cart, which was very old, started crumbling. And first one of Jane's father's feet went through a hole. And then another of Jane's father's feet went through a hole. And then while he was trying to get them out, the whole floor of the pony cart fell to pieces on the road. And the first thing they knew, Jane and her mother and father were standing in the middle of the road with the pony cart around them.

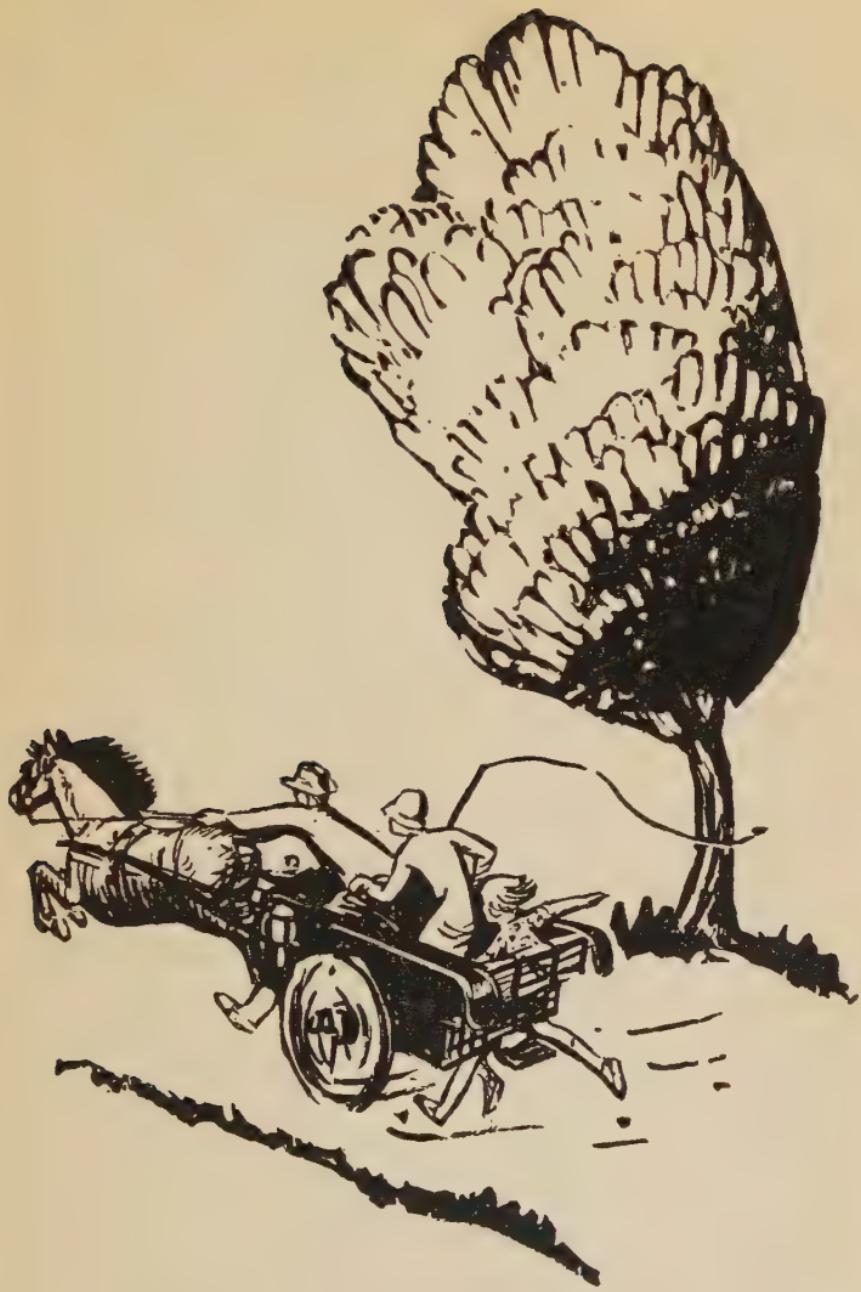
"Run," cried Jane's father. "Run."

Jane's father was right. It was the best thing they could do. So there they were: Clover running as fast as he could with his four feet outside the pony cart, and Jane and her mother and father running as fast as they could with their six feet inside the pony cart trying to keep up with him. It was dreadful.

"Can't you stop him, father?" asked Jane.

"This is aw-aw-AWFUL," whispered Jane's mother. She could only whisper because she didn't have enough breath left to talk out loud with.

Jane's father turned his head for just a minute.



"I have an idea," he said, "let's open the door and get out."

Jane and her mother saw what a good idea this was, so they ran backwards and tried to turn the handle of the pony cart door. But the door was just as old as the rest of the pony cart and the handle was so stiff it wouldn't move.

"We c-can't. Oh f-father, I'm getting so TI-yard."

"I don't think I can stand it much longer," whimpered Jane's mother. But they turned and ran frontwards again.

The truth was they were all getting very tired indeed. Except Clover, who wasn't one bit.

Then suddenly Jane had an idea.

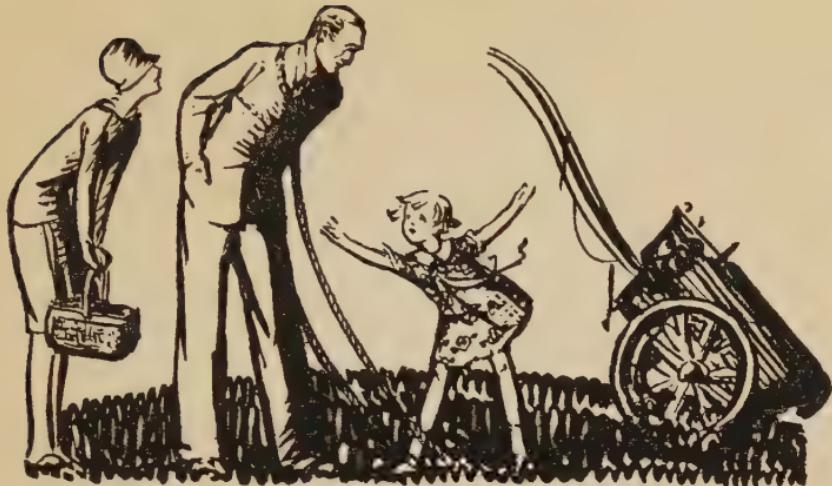
"Father," she shouted, "have you got a knife?"

Jane's father bobbed with his head.

"THEN CUT CLOVER'S TRACES."

Jane's father saw right away what a good idea that was, and quick as a wink he took his knife from his pocket, and leaned over and cut Clover's traces. Then he let go the reins. And Clover looked around surprised. And when he saw he wasn't fastened to the pony cart any more he kicked up his heels and swish-swashed his tail, and ran off down the road by himself, dragging his traces behind him.

Bump went the pony cart as soon as Clover left



it. And plump went Jane and her father and mother in a heap on the road.

"A very good idea," said Jane's father, picking up Jane and her mother and dusting them off, "a very good idea indeed, Jane. Now shall we eat our sandwiches? This is a wonderful place for a picnic."

"My hat," said Jane.

"Don't cry; I'll get you another hat, Jane. I'll get you twenty-seven hats tomorrow."

"Oh, father," said Jane, and had to smile—it was such a silly idea—twenty-seven hats!

"My dress," said Jane's mother. "It's ruined, oh dear."

"You look lovely in it," said Jane's father. And he kissed them both and opened the picnic basket.

"Yum," he said. "Peanut butter sandwiches."

"And jelly ones," said Jane. She was beginning to look more cheerful again.

"And lettuce ones," said Jane's father. "You know you like lettuce sandwiches," he said to Jane's mother.

"Well, yes," she said, "I do." She was beginning to look more cheerful too.

So then Jane's mother and father climbed out over the sides of the pony cart and Jane crawled between the wheels. And they found a smooth green place underneath an oak tree for their picnic. And they ate up every bit of the sandwiches and all the apples and all the cake. And after that Jane looked for acorns under the oak tree and curled some dandelion stems, and Jane's mother and father sat and talked to each other. And then it was time to go home.

"Come on, Jane," said her mother, "it's time to go home."

"How are we going?" asked Jane.

Jane's mother and father looked at each other. They looked and they looked.

"Well," said Jane's father at last, "I really hadn't thought . . ."

"Oh, I know," cried Jane, "it's easy. Mother and I will drive you."

"Why, what a good idea, Jane," said her

mother, "and here's just what we need." And she picked up a long piece of rope from the side of the road.

"Goody," said Jane, "how nice. Now stand still, father."

"Why?" asked Jane's father.

"Oh, father, so we can harness you."

"But I've never been harnessed before," he said, "and I don't think I'll like it."

He stood very still though, while Jane and her mother cut off a short piece of rope to put around his neck, and two long pieces of rope to fasten to him to the pony cart with, and two more pieces for reins.

"There, that's fine," said Jane. "Now back up, father."

"I'm not a pony. I've never been a pony before," said Jane's father crossly.

"Why, father, you're a darling pony," Jane pulled his ears and patted his head, "and here's a lump of sugar for you. And if you trot along nicely William will give you a big raw carrot when we get home."

Jane's father looked pleased at that, and he bent his head over just like Clover and nuzzled the sugar out of Jane's hand.

"Nice pony," said Jane, and pulled his ears again.

After that he backed into the pony cart.

Then Jane and her mother found some boards to lay across the hole where the floor of the pony cart used to be. And then they climbed into the cart, and Jane took up the reins and said, "Giddap, father."

Jane's father turned his head.

"Say 'please giddap,'" he said.

The ride back was fun, and Jane and her mother enjoyed it very much indeed. They saw all kinds of new flowers and birds and had a good time talking about them, except every once in a while Jane's father would stop trotting and turn his head.

"That isn't a bluejay," he'd say. "That's a robin," or, "Don't you know a daisy when you see one?"

"Never mind, father, giddap!" Jane would say. So then he'd start trotting again.

When they got home William was waiting for them at the front gate. He didn't look one bit surprised.

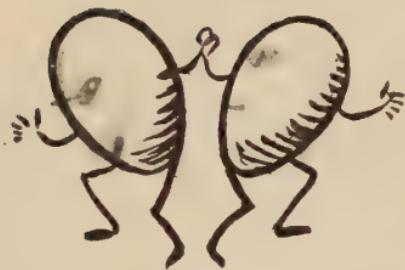
"Aren't you surprised to see us driving father, William?" Jane asked.

"Well," said William, "no. Clover got home about an hour ago and I figured this is what you'd likely do."

"Oh, did you?" asked Jane's father.

Then Jane and her mother got out of the pony cart and William led Jane's father out to the barn and gave him a drink of water. And he unharnessed him.





EGGS-IN-A-MESS



EGGS-IN-A-MESS

ONE of the funniest things that Jane's father did was the way he ate his eggs. Other people when they had eggs for breakfast—boiled eggs—put them in egg cups, chopped off their heads, sprinkled a little salt and pepper inside, and ate them neatly with a spoon, being careful not to dribble down the front. But Jane's father ate his eggs a different way.

He didn't want an egg cup, although Jane and her mother kept telling him he ought to have one.

"No," said Jane's father, "no. I want to eat my eggs my own way."

"But it's so messy," Jane's mother always said.

And then Jane's father always said: "Certainly it's messy. It's called Eggs-in-a-mess. But that's the way I like to eat my eggs."

One morning when they were all sitting at the

breakfast table finishing their cereal and waiting for cook to bring in the eggs Jane's mother opened a big blue letter.

"It's from Aunt Hattie," she said.

"What does she say?" asked Jane's father.

"Whatdoessheshaymuzzer?" asked Jane.

"Don't talk with your mouth full, Jane," said her mother. "She says she's coming to pay us a visit."

"When?" asked Jane's father.

"Monday," said her mother. "Oh dear, MUST you eat your eggs that way?" For cook had brought in the eggs and Jane's father had started fixing his.

"Yes," he said, "I must."

Instead of an egg cup he had a big soup plate in front of him, and first he took up one egg and cracked it open with his knife and spilled the yellow and white into his soup plate; then he did the same thing to another egg; then he took his toast and crumbled it up in little bits of pieces and stirred it in with his eggs; then he took lots of little dabs of butter and put them all around the edge of his plate in quite a pretty design; then he stirred it all round hard again with his spoon.

"Yum," he said. "Eggs-in-a-mess."

Jane and her mother watched him. They shook their heads.

"Other fathers don't eat their eggs that way," Jane reminded him.

"They should," said Jane's father. "Yum!" And he stirred harder.

"Oh dear," said Jane's mother.

"What's the matter?" asked her father.



"What will Aunt Hattie think when she sees you?"

Jane and her mother sat and looked at him wondering WHAT Aunt Hattie would think when she saw him.

"Because it's all very well," went on Jane's mother, "when just Jane and I see you eating eggs-in-a-mess, but to have Aunt Hattie see you is a very different matter."

"We could blindfold her," said Jane's father.

"Oh, father, that would make her cross," Jane said.

"Yes," said Jane's mother, "we'll have to think of something better than that."

"Well, maybe Aunt Hattie would like to try eating her weggs my way," said Jane's father. "It's ever so twasty."

"Eggs, not weggs, father," said Jane.

Jane's mother didn't even answer him. She just kept on watching him eat and wondering how they could possibly cure him of eggs-in-a-mess before Aunt Hattie came on Monday. And after he had kissed them good-bye and gone to catch his train for town they sat down to talk about it.

"How would it be," said Jane, "if we put him in a room all by himself to eat? How would that be? William could build him a huge big high chair and we would make him sit in it with a bib on. We could make a big enough bib out of a bath towel, don't you think? And we could buy a toy hoe for him to use as a pusher. And he would have to sit there all by himself eating his eggs-in-a-mess until he learned better."

"It's a very good idea, Jane," said her mother. "The only thing is, supposing he wouldn't do it?"

Jane hadn't thought of that.

"He's so big," said her mother.

Jane looked sad. "Yes, he is, isn't he?" she said. "I guess we'll have to think of something else. . . ."

"Oh, I know!" cried Jane's mother.

"What, mother?" asked Jane.

"It's a wonderful idea," said her mother. "Come to the kitchen with me this minute while I talk to cook."

So Jane and her mother ran to the kitchen to talk to cook. Jane got there first.

After cook had heard the idea she shook and shook with laughing. Her shoulders shook and the apron over her tummy shook, and her cheeks got shakier and shakier.

"Poor man," she said. "Poor man." And she



wiped away the tears that were in her eyes from laughing so hard.

The next morning when they were sitting at the breakfast table waiting for cook to bring in their breakfast Jane's father noticed that Jane and her mother had soup plates in front of them too.

"Why, what does this mean?" he asked.

"It means," said Jane's mother, "that Jane and I have decided that you must be right about eggs-in-a-mess and we're going to try it too."

Jane and her mother winked at each other. Jane winked with both eyes.

"How nice," said Jane's father. "I felt sure that some day you'd learn to like it too. How very, very nice!"

"Yes," said Jane in a giggling kind of way.

In a minute cook brought in the eggs. She put them down on the table, and then went out again very quickly holding her hand tight over her mouth.

"Now both of you watch and do exactly what I do," said Jane's father, "and you will have two of the very best eggs-in-a-mess that ever were messed."

"Yes," said Jane and her mother, "we will."

"First," said Jane's father, "you break your eggs like this." Jane and her mother did it too.



"Then you crumble up your toast like this." Jane and her mother did it too.

"Then you crumble up your bacon like this, and put dabs of butter around your plate like this, and then you start to stir."

Jane and her mother started stirring too.

While they were stirring cook came in with a big tray with lots of different kinds of things on it. All over her, cook looked as though she knew a secret.

"I think you've got everything there you want, ma'am," she whispered. "phphphshsphpaaaa." Those last noises she made were because she was so bursting.

"Thank you, cook," said Jane's mother, and took a big bowl off the tray. She passed it to Jane's father.

"What's this?" Jane's father asked.

"Peanuts," said Jane's mother and scattered a

big tablespoonful of peanuts all over his eggs-in-a-mess.

"Don't," cried Jane's father.

"What's the matter, father?" asked Jane.

"Your mother is putting peanuts in my eggs-in-a-mess, and peanuts don't belong in an eggs-in-a-mess at all. STOP."

"Oh no," said Jane's mother, "it's delicious. You'll have some, won't you, Jane?" she asked.

"Yum, yes," said Jane.

"And now," said Jane's mother, "here's a bag of peppermint candies."

"What for?" asked Jane's father.

"To put in your eggs-in-a-mess," said Jane's mother. "If eggs-in-a-mess is good, then eggs-in-a-worse-mess is better. Take your hands away," she said. For Jane's father had spread his hands above his soup plate.

"Hold your father's hands, Jane," said her mother.

So Jane held her father's hands while her mother spread a whole layer of pink and white peppermints over the layer of peanuts. Then she grated a little carrot over that; then she poured some tomato ketchup over the carrots.

"There," she said, "you'll find that's just delicious."

Then she reached for the bottle of vinegar.

"No," cried Jane's father, "no."

"Why, what's the matter?" asked Jane's mother. "You'll have some vinegar, won't you, Jane?"

"Yum, yes," said Jane. And she stirred it up with her peanuts and peppermints and carrots and ketchup and eggs and bacon and butter and toast. "Yum."

"Oh," said Jane's father in a weak voice, "oh."

"What's the matter?" asked her mother again.

"Nothing really," said Jane's father, "but will you please excuse me for a minute? I'm not feeling very well." And he got up from the table.

"But aren't you going to finish your eggs-in-a-mess?" asked Jane and her mother.

"Thank you very much, but I don't believe I will," said Jane's father, and he left the room.

"Do you suppose he's cured?" Jane whispered as soon as he'd gone.

"I don't know," whispered her mother. "We can tell tomorrow morning when Aunt Hattie's here."

The next morning they all sat up very straight at the breakfast table because Aunt Hattie was there and everybody always sat up straight wherever Aunt Hattie went.

"I like my eggs boiled exactly two minutes and a half," said Aunt Hattie after she had finished her

orange juice and wiped her mouth. "How many minutes do you like your eggs boiled?"

"Two minutes and a half," said Jane's mother.

"Two minutes and a half," said Jane.

"You haven't said how many minutes you like your eggs boiled," Aunt Hattie said, looking at Jane's father.

"Eggs?" said Jane's father.

"Yes. Your eggs. How many minutes do you like your eggs boiled?" This time she said it louder, because she thought Jane's father must be a little deaf.

"Eggs?" asked Jane's father again, looking as though he didn't understand.

"EGGS, John," shouted Jane's mother.

"EGGS, father," shouted Jane. "How many minutes do you like your EGGS boiled?"

"Don't scream so, Jane," her father said. "Whatever is an egg?" Which showed how very cured he was.





WILLIAM AND JANE



WILLIAM AND JANE

WILLIAM liked it standing still. When he was hoeing or raking or planting seeds or picking peas he stood just as still as he could. Even when he ran he looked as though almost any minute he'd be standing still again. That's the way William was.

Jane wasn't that way, though. She liked it hopping and skipping and jumping and climbing and crawling under and wriggling over and squirming through.

"William," Jane would say to him, "why do you like it so much standing still?"

"Well," William would say very slowly, "well,

Jane, because I do. Why do you like it so much hopping and skipping about?"

"Oh, because I do," Jane would say, and go running off somewhere else to play.

One day Jane had an idea. "William," she said, "how would it be if for one whole day you went skipping and hopping about the way I do and I went around standing almost still the way you do? How would that be?"

"Well," said William, "why?"

"For fun," said Jane. "To surprise my mother and father," said Jane, "and the twins and the twins' nurse and cook."

"Well," said William, "all right." And he went on very slowly pulling up some beets. After he had finished pulling them he put them in his basket and very, very slowly stood up straight again.

"Well," he said, "when had we better start?"

"Tomorrow morning." Jane gave a little skip. "I'll begin the first thing I get up and you begin the first thing you get up."

"Well, all right," said William, "but I don't think I'll like it very much." And he went off towards the kitchen with his beets.

The next morning when Jane got up she didn't jump out of her bed the way she usually did. No. Instead she shoved one foot out very slowly from

underneath the covers, and sat and looked at it.

"Jane," said her mother, who had come in to help her button her back waist-buttons, "why aren't you getting up?"

"Well," said Jane slowly, the way William said things, "I . . . am. . . ." And she poked her other foot very slowly from underneath the covers and sat and looked at IT.

"What's the matter with Jane?" called Jane's father from the next room, where he was neatly lacing up his shoes, "I don't hear her getting up."

"I don't know," called back Jane's mother. "She's acting very queerly. I wish you'd come and see."

So Jane's father came and looked at Jane too. They both stood and looked at Jane looking at her feet.

"Get up, Jane," said her father.

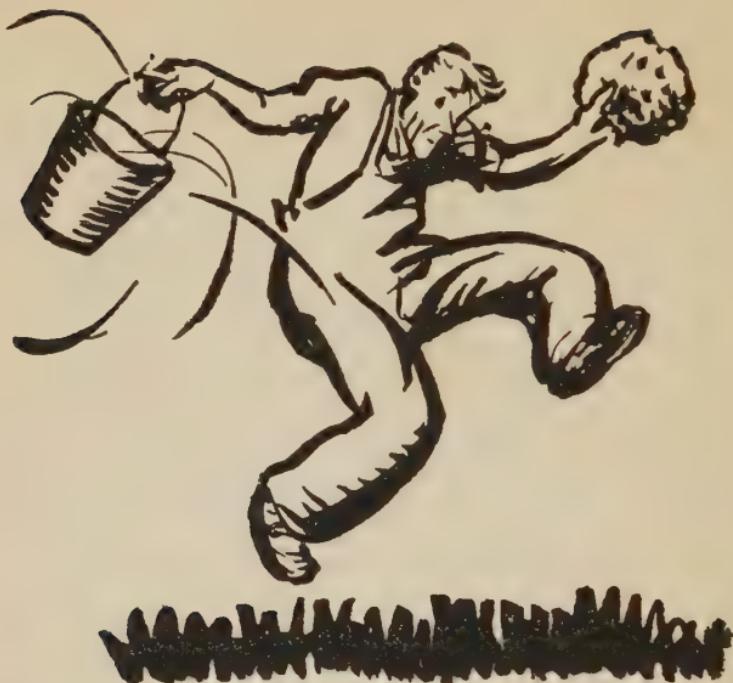
"Get UP, Jane," said her mother.

"I'm counting, Jane," said her father. "One, two, three, four, five . . ."

But suddenly Jane's father saw something out the window.

"Goodness," he said, instead of saying six.

What he saw was William washing off the furniture in the garden. But William wasn't doing it slowly and carefully, standing still in between washes the way he generally did. No. Instead he



was hopping and skipping about waving his sponge and his pail.

"William," called Jane's father from the window, "whatever is the matter?"

"Oh, nothing," called back William. "I'm just hopping. Tra-la, tra-la-la-la."

"This is very queer," said Jane's father. And he and Jane's mother ran downstairs and out into the garden. They ran as fast as they could, but when they got there William had stopped washing furniture and was off skipping underneath the cherry trees.

"William," called Jane's mother, "whatever are you doing?"

"Oh, just skipping," cried William. "Tra-la, tra-la-la-la."

"Well!" said Jane's father and mother.

And they both went in to breakfast so surprised.

"Where's Jane?" asked cook when she brought in the cereal.

"She isn't dressed yet, cook," said Jane's mother. "I don't know what's the matter with her. When we came down she was just sitting and looking at her feet. Do you suppose she's still sitting and looking at her feet?"

"I hope not," said Jane's father, "but I'd better go and see."

"Jane," he called from the foot of the stairs, "are you still sitting and looking at your feet or are you putting shoes on them?"

"No . . . father," said Jane very slowly, from a long way off. "No . . . father . . . I'm . . . still . . . looking . . . at . . . them . . . but . . . I . . . have . . . a . . . stocking . . . in . . . my . . . hand . . . and . . . pretty . . . soon . . . I'm . . . going . . . to . . . put . . . it . . . on."

"I can't imagine what's the matter with Jane," said Jane's father, coming back to his cereal. "She's never been this way before. I wonder if we shouldn't call the doctor."

"The doctor?" asked Jane's mother.

But just then William went by the window. He was going down towards the garden with his hose to water the flowers. But he wasn't going down to the garden with his hose the way he generally went down to the garden with his hose. No. Instead he was playing skip rope with it.

"William!" cried Jane's father, rushing to the door. And "WILLIAM!" cried Jane's mother and cook, rushing to the door.

But William didn't even look at them. He went right on playing skip rope with his hose.

"Why, this is dreadful," said Jane's father, going back to his breakfast once more, "William acting the way he is and Jane acting the way *she* is. I don't know what to think of it, do you?"

"No," said Jane's mother, "I can't think *what* to think."

"Well," said Jane's father finally, "I'll tell you what. After I've gone to work you'd better telephone me at my office and tell me just what's happening."

"All right," said Jane's mother, "I will."

So then Jane's father went upstairs to kiss Jane good-bye.

Jane was standing still in the middle of the room when he came in. She had one stocking on and was looking at her shoes.

"Why, Jane,"—Jane's father stared at her—"we've finished breakfast and I'm all ready to go to my office, and here you still are."

"Well . . . yes . . . here . . . I . . . still . . . am, . . ." said Jane.



"Why, Jane," said her father again.

Then he couldn't wait any longer to talk to her, because he was late. So he kissed her good-bye.

"Don't forget to telephone," he called to Jane's mother, and ran down the street.

After he'd been at his office about an hour the telephone rang. It was Jane's mother.

"Jane has both stockings on now," she said, "and she's started with her shirt."

"She's only as far as her *shirt*?" asked Jane's father.

"Yes," said Jane's mother, "and William's raked a pile of leaves and now he's rolling in them."

"*Rolling* in them?" asked Jane's father.

"Yes," said Jane's mother. "Around and around."

"Oh," said Jane's father, "how awful!"

"Yes," said Jane's mother. "Good-bye."

So then Jane's father went back to his work. He talked to some men, and wrote his name on papers, and opened letters with his knife. But all the time he was thinking about William and Jane.

About lunch time the telephone rang again.

"Jane has her shirt on," said Jane's mother, "and she's lacing up one shoe."

"Just her shirt and her shoe since you called me last time?" asked Jane's father.

Jane's mother sounded sad: "Just her shirt and her shoe."

"And what's William doing?" asked Jane's father.

"William's crawling under the porch," said Jane's mother.

"Why?" asked Jane's father.

"I don't know," said Jane's mother. "All I can see is his feet."



"Oh," said Jane's father, "how awful!"

"Yes," said Jane's mother. "Good-bye."

So then Jane's father went back to his work again. He signed his name some more, and blotted it, and threw lots and lots of papers on the floor. But all the time he was thinking about William and Jane. All afternoon he thought: "How dreadful it is to have William acting the way he is and Jane acting the way she is. I do wish Jane's mother would call me again"

Pretty soon she did.

"Hello," said Jane's father when the telephone rang, "hello, hello."

"Hello," said Jane's mother. Her voice was quite weak.

"What's happening?" asked Jane's father.

"Jane has on her waist," said Jane's mother, "and her panties and one shoe, and now she's putting on her dress."

"Do you think she'll be dressed before it's time for her to go to bed?" asked Jane's father.

"I don't know," said Jane's mother.

"But what shall we do if she isn't dressed by the time it's time for her to get *undressed* again?"

"Oh, I don't know," said Jane's mother. "But won't you please hurry home?"

"What's William doing?" asked Jane's father.

"He's up in a tree," said Jane's mother. "Won't you please hurry home?"

"I'll come right away," said Jane's father.
"Good-bye."

So he hurried home as fast as he could, and when he got inside the gate he looked up in all the tops of the trees for William.

"William," he called. "William! Come down, William. Nice William. Come down."

But William wasn't in a tree. No, William was leaning against the side of the house with his head hanging over.

"Why, William," said Jane's father, "Jane's mother just telephoned me that you were up in a tree, so I hurried home to get you down again. Why did you climb up a tree, William?"

"Well," said William very slowly, "I wish I never had."

"Are you sorry that you did it, William?" asked Jane's father.



"Yes," said William, "very."

"And you won't climb up trees or roll in hay or hop or skip or jump rope any more the way you did today?"

"No," said William, "never. What I feel like doing," he said, "is standing very still for a long, long time." And he began to do it.



Then Jane's father went to look for Jane. He found her in her mother's room. She was all dressed with her hair ribbon on and both shoes laced. And she was skipping as hard as she could.

"Hello, father," she said without stopping her skipping.

"Hello, Jane," said her father.

"I'm all dressed now," said Jane, giving her father a kiss without stopping her skipping.

"Isn't it funny? Suddenly she got dressed very

quickly," said Jane's mother, "and started this skipping."

"I'm hopping now," said Jane. And she was.

"And pretty soon I'm going to jump," she said. And she did. And then she started climbing up, and crawling under, and wriggling over, and squirming through. Just the way she always used to do.

"I'm never going to stand still again," said Jane. And she never, never did.



JANE'S FRIENDS
AND JANE'S FRIENDS' FATHERS AND MOTHERS



JANE'S FRIENDS AND JANE'S FRIENDS' FATHERS AND MOTHERS

JANE was very glad that she had twins. Whenever a friend of Jane's was wishing for a new baby Jane would say, "Just one new baby?" Or if Jane saw a baby carriage on the street she would always go up and look inside it and say, "I was just wondering if you had two in there." Or if one of her friends said, "I have a new blue dress with ribbons on it," Jane would say, "Well, I have twins at home."

Jane helped take care of the twins. She kept taking thumbs out of their mouths. And while they were having their dinners she kept putting bottles back into their mouths. And when they were old enough to sit up and wobbled over on their noses she took them off their noses and sat them up straight again.

All Jane's friends liked the twins very much, too. They watched them having their baths in the morning when they looked like pink turtles, and they followed them round in their baby carriage

when they were all screwed up and asleep, and sometimes the twins' nurse let two of them push the baby carriage for a while. Jane's friends all liked the twins so much that they asked their mothers and fathers if they couldn't please have twins too. But Jane's friends' mothers and fathers didn't think it was a very good idea. And then Jane's friends said, "But Jane has twins."

Some of her friends would even whine a little. "But Jane has twins," they'd say.

And they kept on teasing and teasing their mothers and fathers for twins.

Jane's friends' fathers and mothers didn't like being teased for twins at all.

"Why couldn't you just have had one baby the way other people do," they'd say crossly to Jane's father and mother, "and then we shouldn't be being teased for twins this way?"

And Jane's mother and father in quite small voices would answer, "We don't know why."

And then one day one of Jane's friends named Sally started crying because she wasn't twins.

"Never mind," Sally's mother and father said to her, "never mind, dear." And they each took Sally by a hand and went over to call on Jane and Jane's mother and father.

"We're cross at you," Sally's mother and father said to Jane's mother and father.



"Why?" asked Jane's mother and father, although they really knew.

"Because before you had twins Sally was perfectly happy being one little girl, and now she wants to be two," said Sally's mother and father.

"Oh," said Jane's father.

"And I'm o-only o-one," sniffled Sally.

"Never mind, dear," said her mother, drying her tears for her.

"Never mind, dear," said her father, blowing her nose for her.

"And I suppose you know," said Sally's mother, "that all the other mothers and fathers are cross at you too."

"Yes, but . . ." began Jane's mother in a small voice again.

"So I hope you won't do it again," interrupted Sally's mother very rudely. And she took Sally's hand, and said "come on" to Sally's father, and they all walked straight back to their house.

Now it made Jane's mother and father very sad to have Sally wishing she were two little girls instead of one. And it made them even sadder to have all the other fathers and mothers so cross at them. But, as Jane's father said, "What can we do?"

"We like the twins so much now that we couldn't throw them away," said Jane's mother.

"Certainly not. They're so smile-y and fat," said Jane's father.

"They laugh if you stick a finger in them," said Jane's mother.

"I know," said Jane's father. "They gwurgle."

"And twins are awfully hard to hide," went on Jane's mother.

"Yes, because if you don't see them—" said Jane's father.

"You hear them," said Jane's mother.

"Yes, that's just the way it is."

"We really must think of something, though," said Jane's mother, "to make all the other mothers and fathers stop being cross with us. Everywhere I go they look so mad."

"Shall I call William?" asked Jane. "He might be able to think."

"Yes, that's a good idea," said Jane's father. So Jane went and called him.

"William," said Jane's father when William came in with a paint brush in his hand because he had been painting the fence, "we're trying to think of a way to make all the other fathers and mothers stop being so cross with us because we have twins."

William put his brush down on the window sill.

"Oh," he said.

"Because you see now all my friends want twins too," explained Jane.

"Oh," said William, "I see." And he started to think.

After they had all been thinking for quite a long time without thinking of anything Jane said, "Don't you think that if we had the twins to look at it might help?"

"Why, yes," said Jane's father, "it might."

So Jane went out to ask the twins' nurse please to bring in the twins.

In a few minutes the twins' nurse came in with Ann and sat her on the floor. And then she went out and came in again with Mary and sat her on the floor.

"Goo," said Mary.

"Glug," said Ann.



And then they both smiled and let four fat drops drop off the tips of their tongues.

The twins' nurse wiped off Ann's chin.

"Imagine being cross at anybody for having these twins," she said.

"Imagine," said Jane, wiping off Mary's chin too.

"The little darlings," said the twins' nurse.

"Well," said William, who had been watching the twins waving their arms, and pounding their

feet, and blowing their bubbles, "well, you say the trouble is that all Jane's friends want twins too?"

"Yes," said Jane's mother and father.

William got up very slowly.

"I have an idea," he said.

"Oh, William, what?" asked Jane and Jane's mother and father.

"Well, it's a good one, but I'm not going to tell you till tomorrow morning. And Jane will have to help me," he said. "And now I better get back to my painting." And he put one finger under each twin's chin the way he always did, and went and got his paint brush, and went back to his painting.

Jane and Jane's mother and father could hardly wait till it was morning to find out what William's idea was.

But finally it was time to get up; and finally they were dressed; and finally all their teeth were brushed; and finally they had all eaten their breakfasts. Then they rushed out in the garden and said:

"Here we are, William."

"Yes," said William, "I see."

"We're ready for the idea, William," said Jane and Jane's mother and father.

"Well," said William, "all right. Do you see



the twins' buggy sitting over there on the lawn, Jane?" he asked.

"Yes," said Jane.

"Well," said William, "wheel it."

"Why?" asked Jane.

"Never mind," said William. "Wheel it down the street."

"But, William, what's inside it?" asked Jane, because she could see that something was wriggling round inside the buggy, and she knew it wasn't twins.

"Never mind," said William. "Just wheel it down the street, and don't you peek."

So Jane didn't even peek once because she was afraid of spoiling William's idea. She just wheeled the baby buggy very carefully down the street.

Pretty soon Jane's friends started coming out of the doors of their houses.

"Goody," they cried, "Jane's wheeling the twins." And they all came running to see.

First Johnny poked his head in to look at the twins.

"Oh," he said. And didn't take it out again.

Then Billy stuck his head in.

"Oh," he said. And kept his head in too.

Then Sally pushed round till she found room for hers.

"OH," she said. And then Jane couldn't stand it any longer. So she looked.

"PUPPIES!" said Jane. "One, two, three, four, five, SIX PUPPIES!"

And she was right. There they were—six squirming soft-eared puppies. Six. Not two, but six. They bit each other's ears and noses, and licked the children's hands all over with their warm rough little tongues; they dribbled and they squeaked. Oh!

In a few minutes all the children on the street were out playing with the puppies, and all their mothers and fathers too.

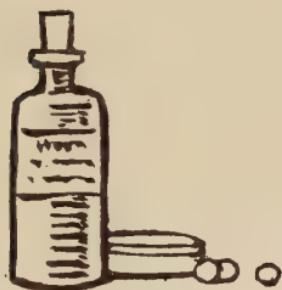
"WE WISH we could have six little puppies just like these," the children said.

"Would you rather have puppies than twins?" asked all their mothers and fathers very quickly.

"Oh YES," said the children.

So the next day each of Jane's friends were given six puppies. And none of them ever teased their mothers and fathers for twins again. But Jane liked hers better and better.





JANE'S FATHER'S OWN IDEA



JANE'S FATHER'S OWN IDEA

AUNT HATTIE was coming to stay with Jane and her mother and father and the twins' nurse and William and cook for two months.

"For two months?" asked Jane's father after Jane's mother had finished reading the letter from Aunt Hattie.

"Yes," said Jane's mother.

"Oh," said Jane's father.

Pretty soon Aunt Hattie came. She brought a trunk with her, and a black shiny bag full of bottles and boxes. Jane watched her unpack.

"What's in all those bottles?" she asked.

"Balm-unguent," said Aunt Hattie.

"What's that for?" asked Jane.

"Everything," said Aunt Hattie, and her eyes began to shine. "There's nothing like it," she said, "for bruises or cuts or aches or pains or bee bites. It's wonderful. And with so many people in the house," she went on, "I thought there'd always be *something* the matter."

"I fall down quite a lot," said Jane. "I don't watch where I'm going and then I fall down."

"And get a bruise, I suppose?" asked Aunt Hattie.

"Yes," said Jane, "or a cut."

"Well," said Aunt Hattie, patting one of the bottles, "this is wonderful for cuts and bruises. Have you a bruise now, Jane?"

Jane started looking.

"Yes," she said, "here's quite a green and blue one."

"Why," said Aunt Hattie in an excited way, "why, you poor child. Now just stand still a minute and I'll fix it for you." And she opened one of the bottles and started rubbing balm-unguent on Jane's bruise.

"There," she said, "*that* will soon feel better."

"But what's in all those little boxes, Aunt Hattie?" asked Jane.

"Calomel," said Aunt Hattie.

"What's that for?" asked Jane.

"Everything," said Aunt Hattie, and her eyes started shining again. "There's nothing like it for colds or chills or fevers."

"Stomick aches?" asked Jane.

"Have you a stomach ache, Jane?" asked Aunt Hattie, starting to open up one of the little boxes right away.

"No," said Jane, "not now."

"Oh, well," said Aunt Hattie, "some one's sure to have one soon," and she shut it up again.

In a few minutes it was time for supper.

"How do you do, Aunt Hattie?" said Jane's father, nodding his head.

"How do you do, Jane's father?" said Aunt Hattie. And she nodded hers. Then they all sat down to eat.

"What's that funny smell?" asked Jane's father, while he was cutting up the chicken.

"Funny smell?" asked Aunt Hattie, sitting up high in her chair.

"Terrible smell," said Jane's father. "Seems to come from Jane."

"That," said Aunt Hattie quietly, "is balm-unguent. Jane has a very dangerous bruise and I have rubbed it with balm-unguent."

Just then Jane's father sneezed.

"Jane's father," said Aunt Hattie, "you're catching a cold."

Jane's mother looked at him.

"Are you, dear?" she asked.

"No," said Jane's father.

"Yes, you are," said Aunt Hattie.

"You sneezed, father," said Jane.

"No," said Jane's father. And then he sneezed again.

"There," said Aunt Hattie, "Jane, you run quickly and get one of my little boxes of calomel. It's lucky," said Aunt Hattie, "that I've come to stay."

"No," said Jane's father in a whining voice, "I don't like medicine. I don't like it more than anybody else in the world."

"Well, try and be brave, father," said Jane. And she ran out of the room to get the calomel.

In a few minutes she came back holding a round little box straight out in front of her. She was skipping.

"How many should he take, Aunt Hattie?" she asked, undoing the top.

"Well, two is enough for now," said Aunt Hattie. "Hold out your hand."

Jane helped her father hold out his hand and



Aunt Hattie put two little white calomel pills inside it. Jane's father kept them there.

"Well, go on, dear," said Jane's mother.

"Go on, Jane's father," said Aunt Hattie.

"Shall I see how far I can count before you take them, father?" asked Jane. "One, two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight, nine . . ."

"Stop, Jane," said her father. And he swallowed them down.

"There," said Aunt Hattie, and she smiled at him. "Now after dinner I'll soak a piece of flannel in the balm-unguent and put it on your chest, and then I'll give you two more pills, and in the morning you'll be feeling fine."

After Aunt Hattie had been visiting them for about a week she had rubbed balm-unguent on everybody in the house: on William, who hurt



his hand in the lawn mower machine, and cook, who burned her thumb in a pudding, and the twins, who got stuck with pins, and the twins' nurse, who sprained her back hanging out clothes, and Jane's mother, who fell off a stepladder, and Jane, who always had new bruises anyway. Aunt Hattie rubbed them all with balm-unguent. And she was very happy doing it.

In fact the minute Jane's father came home at night he could tell just how many people had hurt themselves by how smelly the smell of balm-unguent was in the house. One night it was dreadful.

"Oh," he thought, "everybody's been run over by an automobile or burned themselves playing with matches. Something dreadful's happened." And putting his handkerchief to his nose he ran upstairs as fast as he could.

"What's happened?" he shouted.

Aunt Hattie was standing in her door.

"How many people are hurt? What's happened?" he shouted again.

"Don't scream so, Jane's father," said Aunt Hattie. "Nothing has happened at all."

"But the balm-unguent! It's never been so smelly before. It's wawful," he said.

"Well, Jane's dolls all have very bad chest colds," said Aunt Hattie, and so Jane is fixing

them up with a little flannel and balm-unguent. Very sensible, I'm sure," she said. "I like to see it."

Then Jane's father kept right on running till he found Jane's mother.

"Listen," he said, "this must be stopped."

"What?" asked Jane's mother.

"This balm-unguent and this calomel. I've eaten hills of calomel pills, and I've had balm-unguent rubbed on me until I ache all over. And now Jane's dolls have chest colds and balm-unguent is rubbed on *them*; and pretty soon cook will be cleaning the silver with balm-unguent, and William will be cleaning the pony with balm-unguent. And it's got to be stopped."

"Well," said Jane's mother, "I don't like it either, but what can we do?"

Jane's father thought.

"Isn't there anything that would make Aunt Hattie not want to visit us any longer?" he asked.

"You mean make her go *away*?" asked Jane's mother.

"Yes," said Jane's father.

"But I like Aunt Hattie," said Jane's mother.

"So do I," said Jane's father, "but I don't like balm-unguent outside of me and I don't like calomel inside of me. And it's got to be stopped."

"Your face is getting red," said Jane's mother.

"I don't care," shouted Jane's father. "Call Jane," shouted Jane's father. "Call Jane quickly. We must think."

So Jane's mother called Jane and Jane came. They could smell her coming.

"Stay over on the other side of the room, Jane," said her father, "and think."

"What about, father?" asked Jane.

"Think about what things Aunt Hattie doesn't like," said Jane's father. "Is she scared of anything?"

"Measles," said Jane.

"Measles?" asked her father.

"Yes, she's never had them," said Jane. "She's had everything else very badly twice, whooping cough and mumps and scarlet fever."

"And so she's scared she'll get the measles?" asked Jane's father again.

"Yes, she is. She's very scared indeed."

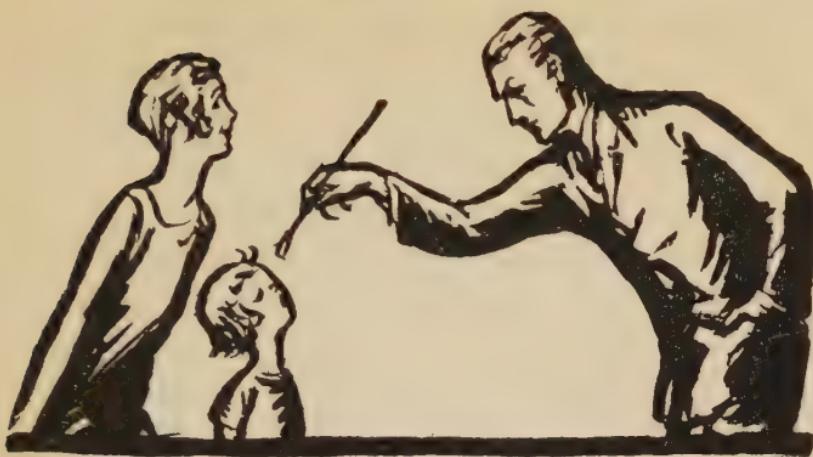
"Oh," said Jane's father.

"May I stop thinking now?" asked Jane, who wanted to get back and rub some more balm-unguent on her children.

"Do let her stop thinking now," said Jane's mother. She was a little tired of thinking too.

And then Jane's father stood up very straight.

"No one needs to think any more," he said. "I have just had an idea."



Jane and her mother looked at each other. They were so surprised.

"It's a wonderful idea," he said. "Go get your paint box, Jane. Hurry."

So Jane ran and got her paint box.

"Here, father," she said. And then Jane and her mother stood very still and waited to see what Jane's father could possibly have had for an idea.

Jane's father took the paint box. First he opened it and put it on the table. Then he took out the paint brush and dipped it in a bowl of sweet peas; and swished it around on the little square of red paint.

"Hold up your face, Jane," he said.

So Jane held it up.

"Now stand still, Jane," said her father. And he began painting red spots all over Jane's cheeks

and chin and nose and neck and even behind her ears. It took lots of spots for Jane's cheeks but he put them all in.

"Now it's your turn," he said to Jane's mother. And he painted careful little red spots all over Jane's mother's cheeks and chin and nose and even behind her ears; he put two on the tips. And then he painted himself. There was just enough red to go round.

"Oh, father, is this the idea?" asked Jane. She had been too surprised to say anything before.

"Never mind. Come with me," said Jane's father.

Jane's mother looked at herself in a little round mirror.

"Where are we going?" she asked.

"We're going to see Aunt Hattie," said Jane's father, "right away."

So they all went to see Aunt Hattie in her room.

Aunt Hattie was sitting looking at her medicines. Aunt Hattie, besides eating calomel and rubbing herself with balm-unguent, took seven medicines every day all by herself. She had a different spoon for each of the four different kinds of medicines she took out of a spoon, and she had different glasses of water with cardboard over them for swallowing the three kinds of medicines that were pills.

She was very glad to see Jane and her father and mother because it was just the time for her pink pills and she liked having people see her being brave about her pills.

"Hello," Jane's father said.

"Hello, Jane's father," she said cheerfully, "would you hand me that little square box, please? It's time for my pink pills."

"Here you are, Aunt Hattie," said Jane's father very cheerfully too.

"Mercy," she said. "Whatever is the matter?"

"Why, that's what I came to see you about," said Jane's father. "I thought maybe if you'd rub a little balm-unguent on these spots . . ."

"Measles!" cried Aunt Hattie.

Then she saw Jane and her mother.

"Measles!" she cried even louder, and rushed from the room.

"Why, what's the matter, Aunt Hattie?" called Jane's father, running after her, "I'm sure just a little bit of balm-unguent . . ."

But Aunt Hattie ran out of the house. She ran so fast that in just a minute she was half way down the street. Jane and her mother and father stood in the window watching her go.

"I'll send her her trunk tomorrow," said Jane's mother.

"And her calomel," said Jane.

"And her balm-unguent," said Jane's father.

And then they all went skipping down the hall to the bathroom, and each took a wash rag, and washed off their spots.





THE HAIR-CUT CURE



THE HAIR-CUT CURE

JANE's father's hair was very funny because there was one spot on his head that didn't have any hair on it at all; and then there were some other spots around towards the back of his neck and the front of his forehead that generally had too much hair on them. That was because Jane's father wouldn't ever get a hair-cut.

It was very hard for Jane and her mother trying to get Jane's father's hair cut where he had hair, because Jane's father didn't care if it was cut or not.

One morning at breakfast Jane and her mother were telling Jane's father about how long his hair was, and how dreadful it looked, and how other children's fathers *liked* to get their hair cut, when suddenly Jane's mother decided it didn't do any good to talk. Besides, she was so hoarse from talking so long that she didn't have much voice left; she opened and closed her mouth but no noises came out. So she got a piece of paper and

wrote HAIR-CUT on it and put it in Jane's father's pocket.

And that evening he came home with the little piece of paper still in his pocket and his hair not cut one bit. It was even longer, of course, because it had had nothing to do all day but grow.

Then the next day Jane's mother got a little piece of paper and wrote down: IMPORTANT, PLEASE GET HAIR-CUT TODAY. DO NOT FORGET. And that evening he came home again with the piece of paper still in his pocket and his hair a little longer than ever. It was very discouraging. So the next morning she wrote: DO NOT COME HOME AT ALL EXCEPT WITHOUT YOUR HAIR. But in the evening there he was again with even more of it—all waving in his eyes.

So then Jane and her mother decided that they would just have to sit down and think of some way to cure him of not getting hair-cuts.

They thought and they thought.

"We could tie things on him to remind him," said Jane.

"Yes," said Jane's mother, "we could."

"We could tie strings on his coat buttons. Don't you think if he looked down and saw strings tied on his coat buttons he would remember that he was supposed to be remembering something?"

"Yes." Jane's mother sighed. "But he wouldn't

remember *what* he was supposed to be remembering. That's the trouble."

"Oh," said Jane.

"Then I know!" she cried suddenly.

"What?" asked her mother.

"If we tied a pair of scissors on his middle coat button, wouldn't that make him remember that something ought to be cut?"

"Why, yes, Jane," said her mother, "that's a very good idea. And we're going out to a party tomorrow night too, so it's very important."

So the next morning before Jane's father went to his office they tied a nice shiny pair of scissors on his middle coat button.

"I don't like this," Jane's father said. "People will look at me and think I'm silly wearing a pair of scissors on my coat button."

"Then," said Jane and her mother quickly and at the same time, "then go and get your hair cut. And the minute you have had your hair cut you can take the scissors off and look like other fathers."

"Maybe I'd remember it without the scissors," said Jane's father.

Jane tried to curl a piece of his front hair round her little finger.

"No, father," she said, "you never have before."

"And you know we're going on a party to-night," said Jane's mother, "where all the other fathers will have such nice short hair."

"Oh, all right, all right," said Jane's father. And he kissed them good-bye and went off to his work.

All day long Jane and her mother wondered whether Jane's father was getting a hair-cut. They looked at each other and said: "Do you suppose he's getting it now?"

And when it was nearly time for him to come home they both stood at the window watching. Jane jumped up and down.

"I see him," she cried at last. "I see him. I see him."

She was right. It was her father. But when he was still a long way off they could see something else too, something shining on his middle button. Yes, it was the scissors.

When she heard him open the front door Jane ran downstairs as fast as she could.

"Father, take off your hat," she cried, "take it off quickly."

"Yes, Jane," said her father, and he hung it up quite nicely on a hook. Then Jane's mother turned on all the lights so they could see. . . .

"Oh, father!" said Jane.

It was true. What Jane thought might be

true when she saw the scissors still hanging from the middle button *was* true; her father had forgotten to have his hair cut. Again. After all the things they had done to make him remember.

Jane's mother sat down on the nearest chair.



"To think," she said, "that I have to take you to a party tonight looking this way. Oh. Oh. Oh."

"Don't cry, mother," said Jane. "Be brave. We'll think of something next time to make you remember, won't we, father?"

"Why, yes," said Jane's father, patting Jane's mother on the shoulder, "of course you will. Don't cry. You see," he went on, "I couldn't remember what the scissors were for, so I thought they must be to cut out paper dolls with. So I did." And he

showed Jane some lovely paper dolls that he had cut out with the scissors.

"Why, father," said Jane, "you did them very nicely."

But Jane's mother kept right on with her crying.

"Don't cry, mother," said Jane again. "See my paper dolls."

"Please twop it," said Jane's father, looking sad.

"Remember Bobby Bumble, *he* didn't mind a tumble," said Jane.

"Twumble, not tumble, Jane," said her father.

But Jane's mother still kept right on with her crying.

"This is twerrible,"—Jane's father walked up and down the room,—"swimply twerrible." And then he said: "I know what I'll do. I'll go away until you and your mother have thought of some other better way to make me remember. Call me when you've thought."

"All right, father," said Jane.

The minute Jane's father had gone Jane's mother stopped crying.

"Jane," she whispered, taking hold of Jane's arm, "I have an idea."

"What, mother?" whispered back Jane.

"Well," said Jane's mother, "this is it: we will

tie one of your hair ribbons on the front part of your father's hair and he will have to go to the party that way tonight. I think it will cure him."

"Oh, mother—a pink one!" cried Jane. And she ran off to get it. She found the pinkest one she could, and then they both went to look for Jane's father.

He was lying on his bed reading the paper.

"Oh, hello," he said. "Did you have an idea?"

"Yes, father," Jane said.

"You hold his head, Jane," said her mother, "and I'll tie it on."

"Tie what on?" asked Jane's father, sitting up.

"Your hair ribbon, father," said Jane.

"Oh no," said Jane's father, and he smiled. "Oh no—you're making a mistake. Great big grown-up men like me don't wear hair ribbons."

"Oh yes, they do, father," said Jane, "if they won't get hair-cuts and let their hair grow long like little girls'—then they have to wear hair ribbons. Please don't wiggle," she said.

But Jane's father didn't like it at all. He wiggled and wiggled.

"I'll take it off," he said, "as soon as I get to the party."

"Oh no, you won't, father," said Jane, "because you want to be cured, don't you? You want to learn to get hair-cuts just like other



fathers, don't you? So mother and I will be proud?"

"Well," said Jane's father, "I suppose so."

And he got up and looked at himself in the mirror.

The hair ribbon really looked very cheerful on top of his head—it was so pink. But Jane's father didn't look cheerful one bit. Jane's mother did though.

"It's time to get dressed now," she said, "because of course we don't want to be late."

So Jane's mother and father started getting dressed, and Jane went out in the kitchen to tell cook all about everything. Jane's mother called her when they were ready to go.

Jane's mother looked very pink and green when she was dressed, and Jane's father looked very shiny and black and white. He was wearing his tall black hat, but the hair ribbon peeked out just a tiny bit over one eye.

"Your hair ribbon peeks out just a tiny bit over one eye, father," said Jane.

But Jane's father didn't answer. He just nodded his head, and opened the door, and he and Jane's mother went off to the party.

The next morning Jane fell some of the way downstairs because she was in such a hurry to hear about whether her father was cured yet of not getting hair-cuts. She found him sitting and drinking his orange juice, and looking very cheerful. But her mother looked as though she didn't like her orange juice at all.

"Well, father," said Jane, sprinkling quite a lot of sugar on her cereal, "did you get cured?"

Jane's father only smiled.

"Did he get cured, mother?" asked Jane. "Tell me."

"No, Jane," said her mother, "he didn't."

"Why not?" asked Jane.

"Well," said her mother, blowing her nose, which looked rather pink, "in the beginning I hoped he would be, because when we first got there he stayed in a corner with his face to the wall for quite a long time so people wouldn't see his hair ribbon—he was so ashamed."

"But *then* . . ." interrupted Jane's father.

"But then some ladies went to see what the matter was because none of the other fathers were

sitting in corners with their faces to the wall. . . .”

“And when . . .” interrupted Jane’s father.

“And when they saw his hair ribbon they liked it. They thought it was funny, but they liked it. And pretty soon I couldn’t see your father, Jane, there were so many ladies around him laughing and talking to him about his hair ribbon.”

“Lots of ladies,” said Jane’s father.

“Oh, father,” said Jane.

Jane’s mother blew her nose again and wiped one eye a little.

“May I wear my hair ribbon to the next party too?” asked her father.

“No,” said Jane’s mother, putting down her spoon.

“No,” said Jane.

“Well, may I wear it to the office then?” he asked.

“No,” they both said, “you may never wear it again.”

Jane and her mother sat there feeling discouraged and sad because none of their curing ideas had been any good, when suddenly Jane had another.

“My dolly lawn mower,” cried Jane, “my nice new dolly lawn mower.”

“You mean for my hair?” asked Jane’s father, putting his hand to his head.



"Why, yes, father," said Jane, "it's lovely and sharp; it cuts very nicely."

"What a good idea, Jane," said Jane's mother. "Go get it quickly."

So Jane ran off to get her nice new dolly lawn mower.

"Now lie down, father," she said when she came back, "so I can mow your hair."

And poor Jane's father did. He didn't want to do it, but he did.

Jane had a nice time mowing though. She mowed and mowed.

"There," she said at last, "there, father—now wait a minute while I get the rake."

So Jane went off to get her dolly rake. And Jane's father sat there feeling very cured.

"I've never felt so cured of anything," said Jane's father to Jane's mother.

"As of not getting hair-cuts?" asked Jane's mother.

"Yes," he said, "I'm never not going to again."

And he never did not.





THE TWINS' PINS



THE TWINS' PINS

JANE'S mother didn't like to sew. She didn't like to sew one bit. And she was the worst button on sewer that Jane's father said he'd ever seen.

If Jane's father had a button off the middle of the tummy of his shirt, Jane's mother would sew that button back on again near Jane's father's neck. Or around towards the middle of his back. Or even on the wrong side of his shirt—in some place where no buttonhole could ever reach it.

And then if the neck of Jane's father's shirt had a tear in it, Jane's mother would sew the whole neck of his shirt together so Jane's father couldn't get his head through. Or if Jane's father's sock had a hole in it she would sew up his sock so he couldn't get his toes in. And then cook and the

twins' nurse and Jane and Jane's mother would all have to go running around looking for the scissors, so that Jane's father could get his toes in his sock, or his head through the neck of his shirt.

Every day Jane's father would look at Jane and say, "How soon do you suppose you'll learn how to sew, Jane?"

And Jane would answer: "I'd rather learn how to saw wood so I can make chairs and tables for you and mother to sit on, father dear."

And then Jane's father would say, "Oh," quite sadly, and use a safety pin to pin himself together with.

The twins made it very easy for Jane's father that way, though, because when there is one baby in the house there are always a great many safety pins, but when there are two babies in the house there are even more. So he was glad of that.

But then one day when he was looking quietly around the twins' room for a safety pin to pin his coat together with because it was a cold day out, and his coat didn't have any more buttons left on it, the twins' nurse came into the room and said, "There are no safety pins in here."

"Oh," said Jane's father. "But I've always found safety pins in here before. I've always been sure to find safety pins in here before."

The twins' nurse folded up some clothes and put them in a drawer. She shut the drawer.

"Well," she said, "you won't find any now." And she walked out of the room.

But it was such a cold day outside and Jane's father needed a pin so badly that he kept right on looking.

"Surely," he said to himself, "surely in just a minute I shall see something bright and shining on the floor, and I will stoop down to look at it, and it will be a safety pin."

But there wasn't one safety pin to be found anywhere. And finally Jane's father sat down in a chair and wondered what to do. . . .

Jane's mother was out so she couldn't even try to sew his buttons on. And cook was busy cooking. And the twins' nurse was busy washing. And anyway she'd seemed so cross that Jane's father didn't feel like asking her to sew some buttons on his coat.

He wondered and he wondered. . . .

Then suddenly he stopped wondering. He took off his shoes and started tiptoeing very softly down the hall. When he got to the screen porch he stopped and listened. And then he looked out to see.

What he saw was the twins in their two little beds, sound asleep.

"Yes," Jane's father whispered to himself, "if I am very careful I think that I can do it."

And still tiptoeing very softly and looking round over his shoulder to see if anyone were



watching him he went over to one of the beds and unpinned a pin from a twin.

"Oh," he said to himself, "goody."

And holding it tight in his hand so nobody could see he ran back to where he'd left his shoes and put them on again. Then he pinned up his

coat with his pin, and ran outdoors as fast as ever he could.

The twins' nurse was surprised when she came to take up the twins and found that one twin had lost a safety pin. She looked inside Mary's mouth, because it was Mary's pin that had disappeared. But all that was inside Mary's mouth was her tongue and her four little teeth. So then the twins' nurse thought maybe she'd made a mistake herself and just not given Mary enough safety pins to start off with that morning.

But when the next day two safety pins were missing from Ann, and the day after that *three* safety pins were missing from Ann and two from Mary, the twins' nurse wondered and wondered.

She asked Jane if she'd taken the pins off the twins, and Jane said no. And she asked cook and Jane's mother and even William if they had been taking pins off the twins. And they all said no. So the twins' nurse wondered and wondered. . . .

Every day she wondered. And every day she followed Jane's father around on tiptoe to see if she could catch him taking pins off twins. But Jane's father knew when she was following him. So he would walk past the twins' porch very quickly several times but never even stop to look at them. It made the twins' nurse mad.

And then one morning she had an idea. "What

a pretty safety pin that is you're wearing on the middle of your shirt," she said to Jane's father.

She thought he would answer: "Oh yes. Glad you like it. I took it off Ann this morning."

But Jane's father didn't answer that. Jane's father only smiled and did not say one word. Not one word.

In the meantime it was getting harder and harder to keep the twins' clothes on the twins, because you can't keep clothes on twins without pins.

"If only Jane's mother would learn how to sew buttons on Jane's father's clothes," the twins' nurse said to herself, "then he wouldn't always be stealing my twins' pins. Because I'm sure he does," she said to herself, "even though I've never seen him do it. If I had time," she said to herself, "I'd sew his buttons on for him. But how could anybody taking care of twins have time to do anything else?" she said to herself, and went on hanging the twins' things on a clothes-line that went round and round the house.

She was very unhappy.

And then the next day she almost forgot her troubles because Jane's mother got a letter from Aunt Hattie saying that she and Jane's Great-uncle Jonathan were coming to pay a special visit

on Sunday to look at the twins because they'd neither of them ever seen any twins before.

The twins' nurse always liked it very much when people made special visits to see the twins; she thought more people ought to make special visits to see the twins—she was so proud of them. And so she was very busy washing and ironing their best dresses, and making their hair curl even though they didn't have so very much of it.

And then on Sunday Aunt Hattie and Great-uncle Jonathan came.

"How do you do, Aunt Hattie and Great-uncle Jonathan?" said Jane and her mother.

"What did they say, dear?" asked Great-uncle Jonathan in a high squeaky voice.

"They said 'How do you do?'" shouted Jane and her mother.

"They said 'How do you do?'" shouted Aunt Hattie.

"Oh, how do you do?" said Great-uncle Jonathan, pinching Jane's cheek.

"Well," said Aunt Hattie, taking off her coat, "where are the twins? That's what we've come to see."

"But don't you want to sit down for a few minutes and rest after your journey?" asked Jane's mother. "I'll go and find Jane's father."

"No thank you, we're not tired," said Aunt

Hattie, "and what we've come for is to see the twins."

"Oh, all right," said Jane's mother. "Jane, you lead the way."

And so Jane's mother and Aunt Hattie and Great-uncle Jonathan all followed Jane up the stairs and down the hall.

"They may be asleep," Jane whispered back over her shoulder, "so we'd better be quiet."

"What did you say, dear?" asked Great-uncle Jonathan.

"Assleep," hissed Aunt Hattie.

"Assleep," hissed Jane's mother, "they may be assleep."



"Oh, asleep," said Great-uncle Jonathan. And he smiled and nodded his head.

"Here we are," whispered Jane. And she opened the door to the porch.

And there, bending over the bed of one twin—there was Jane's father! Stealing a pin!

"Why, father," said Jane, "what are you doing?"

Jane's father hung his head. And Jane and her mother and Aunt Hattie and Great-uncle Jonathan all stood and watched his face getting redder and redder.

"Well," he said, after they had all been looking at him for quite a long time, "well—don't you see, I—I needed a pin."

"And you were stealing," said Aunt Hattie, loud enough so Great-uncle Jonathan could almost hear, "and you were stealing a pin from a twin?"

"Y-yes," said Jane's father.

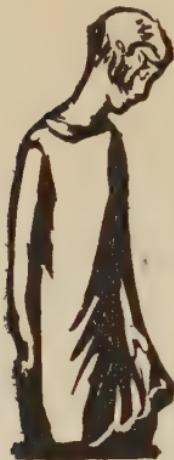
"From a poor little *twin*?"

"Y-yes," said Jane's father.

"What did he steal?" asked Great-uncle Jonathan, pulling the sleeve of Aunt Hattie's dress.

"A pin, Uncle Jonathan," shouted Aunt Hattie, "a pin from a poor little *twin*."

"Why?" asked Great-uncle Jonathan, rubbing his nose.



And Jane and Jane's mother and Aunt Hattie all suddenly wondered why too.

"Why, father?" asked Jane.

"Because," said Jane's father, "I haven't any buttons left on my clothes. And it's really quite a cold winter out this year, don't you think?"

"No buttons?" asked Aunt Hattie, suddenly turning to look at Jane's mother.

Jane's mother was hanging her head.

"DON'T YOU SEW BUTTONS ON JANE'S FATHER'S CLOTHES?" asked Aunt Hattie in a great rolling voice. And Jane's mother had to say, "no."

"Oh," said Aunt Hattie, "how awful!"

"Perhaps you could teach her to sew buttons



on my clothes," said Jane's father, looking cheerful again.

"A very good idea, Jane's father," said Aunt Hattie. "I most certainly will."

"Could she maybe learn to sew them on near the button holes?" asked Jane's father, "and could she learn to darn my socks so my toes can get in?"

"She cer-tain-ly can," said Aunt Hattie.

"Oh," said Jane's father, "how nice!" And he started pinning all the pins he'd stolen right back on the twins again.

The twins woke up then, and put their thumbs in their mouths, and jerked with their legs, and Mary said:

"Goo."

And Ann said:

"Glug."

"Well!" said Great-uncle Jonathan, looking quite pleased. And he pinched all their cheeks.

After that they went downstairs and had lunch. And after lunch Jane's mother had her first button on sewing lesson from Aunt Hattie.

And every week she had another until she learned to be a very good button on sewer indeed.

And Jane's father walked proudly round among the other fathers with ALL his buttons on. And he never, never had to steal another pin.





HOW JANE'S FATHER CURED THEM OF
CURING HIM



HOW JANE'S FATHER CURED THEM OF CURING HIM

ONE day Jane was six years old. She never thought she would be as old as six, but here she was—Six.

"Jane," said her father, after she had looked at all her birthday presents and blown out the candles on her cake, "do you suppose you'll get to be seven too?"

"Oh, father," said Jane, "don't you know that seven comes after six?"

"Does it?" asked Jane's father.

"Of course," said Jane.

"Always?" asked Jane's father.

"Oh, father . . ." said Jane.

"But just because it comes after six once why

should it come after six *always?*” he asked. “It sounds silly to me.”

Jane and her mother looked at each other.

“Do you know what I think?” said Jane’s mother. “I think that tomorrow morning we will send your father to school with you, Jane, so he can learn some things.”

“Oh,” said Jane, “but his trousers are too long. Could we cut off his trousers?”

“Why, yes,” said Jane’s mother, “that’s a good idea. We could cut them off very nicely.”

“No, you couldn’t,” said Jane’s father.

“Oh yes, father—with scissors. It wouldn’t be hard. And then you’d look more like the other children, don’t you see?”

“Yes, and I will buy you a little red tam,” said Jane’s mother.

“And you can wear your own blue socks without garters,” said Jane.

“And your black pumps,” said Jane’s mother.

“And mittens,” said Jane. “And I will give you my apple to carry to school.”

“But I don’t want to go to school,” said Jane’s father. “I did that a long time ago when I was a little boy.”

“But you didn’t *learn*, father,” said Jane.

“What didn’t I learn?” asked her father.

“Anything,” said Jane’s mother. “You didn’t

learn how to hang up your coat. And you didn't learn to write letters. And you didn't learn not to put your hands in your pockets. And you didn't learn to tell time. Why, nearly every night I have to tell you that seven o'clock means seven o'clock or eight o'clock means eight o'clock. And then you always think that twelve o'clock is time to go to bed!"

"Oh, father," said Jane, "just when it's time for lunch!"

As soon as Jane's father had gone down to his office Jane and her mother got the big pair of scissors and cut off Jane's father's trouser legs quite far above the knees. And that afternoon Jane's mother went down town and bought him a nice red tam o'shanter, and nice red mittens and some wooden kindergarten beads to put around his neck, and a pencil, and an eraser.

"I think," said Jane, "that he will look very nice."

In the morning Jane and her mother were waiting for him when he came out of the bathroom after shaving.

"Good morning, Jane," said her father, feeling his cheeks.

"Good morning, father," said Jane. "Did you remember that you were going to school with me this morning?"

"I can't," said Jane's father, "I haven't any pencil."

"Oh, yes, you have, father," said Jane. And she showed him his pencil and his eraser and his little red tam o'shanter and his red mittens; and his socks and shoes and cut off trousers all laid out on the bed.

"And you may carry my apple, father," said Jane, "if you are very good."

"But I don't want to go to school," said Jane's father.

"I want to go down to my office the way I always do," he said.

"You may go down to your office again as soon as you've learned all the things you ought to learn. I'm tired," Jane's mother said, "of teaching you myself."

So Jane's father put on his short trousers and his socks and his shoes and a clean blue shirt and sat down to eat his breakfast, grumbling just a little.

When cook came in with a tray she was so surprised to see so much of Jane's father's legs that she spilled the coffee over them.

"Ouch!" said Jane's father.

"Be brave, father," said Jane. "This morning in school you will learn a song about Bobby Bumble. I'll sing it to you now:



Hurrah for Bobby Bumble
He doesn't mind a tumble,
Up he jumps
And rubs his bumps
And doesn't even grumble."

"Please don't sing, Jane," said her father. And after that he didn't talk at all.

Jane and her mother had lots to say to each other though, they were both so excited to think that Jane's father was finally going to learn things!

"You have to raise your hand before you speak at school," said Jane, stirring her cereal. "Did you know that, father?"

"That's a very good rule indeed," said Jane's mother.

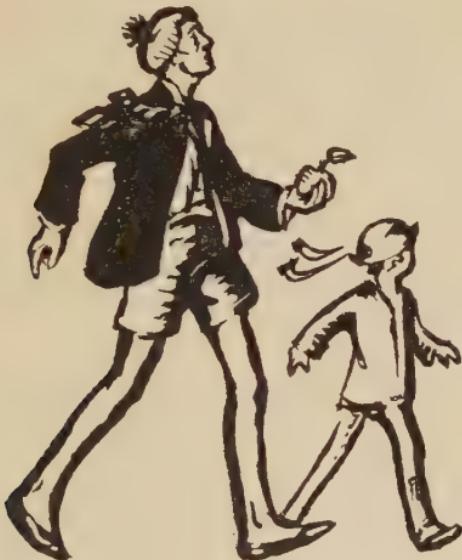
"And you have to clip your rubbers together so they won't get mixed up with the other children's rubbers, and you have to hang up your own coat, and if you're selfish you have to go stand in a corner."

"See?" said Jane's mother. "Now drink your milk, Jane, because it's getting late."

Jane tried to drink her milk, but it was hard to because she was so busy wondering what the teacher would say when she saw her father coming to school.

"But bringing you to school isn't any funnier than Mary bringing her lamb, is it, father?" she asked.

"I don't know," said Jane's father, brushing the crumbs off his bare knees, "that it's funny at all."



Jane had finished her milk by now, and so she went to brush her teeth and get her coat and hat. Jane's mother helped Jane's father on with his tam and mittens.

"There," she said, patting him on the shoulder, "now you're all ready to go. And just think, pretty soon you'll know things. Won't that be nice?"

"No," he said, "it will be whorrid."

"Horrid, father, not whorrid," said Jane. Then she gave him her apple to carry, and off they went.

On the way to school everybody looked at Jane's father's legs. Some people laughed. Jane didn't like it when they laughed at her father's legs. Still, they laughed at Mary's lamb, she remembered, and it's *very* important for my father to learn the things that he's never learned before.

"Here we are, father," she said, "and the first thing you do is to go and say good morning to Miss Humphrey. Then you hang your coat up all by yourself. Mother will be very glad to have you learn that."

Miss Humphrey was standing in the middle of a circle of children who were saying good morning to her. Jane went up and said:

"This is my father, Miss Humphrey. I brought him because when he went to school a long time ago he didn't learn things. He didn't learn that seven comes after six, or how to write letters, or how to tell time, or anything. Say good morning to Miss Humphrey, father."

"Good morning, Miss Humphrey," said Jane's father.

"Good morning, dear," said Miss Humphrey. And Jane's father looked more cheerful right away.



"Now where shall we put your father, Jane?" asked Miss Humphrey. "He doesn't look to me as though he'd fit—does he, children?"

"No," cried the children, "he doesn't look as though he'd fit one bit."

They tried putting him in one of the little red chairs but he spilled over the sides so badly that there was just no use.

"I know," cried one of the children, "if we put all our chairs close together in a circle with the backs facing out, then he could cross his legs and sit in the middle. How would that be?"

"But then you wouldn't have any chairs," said Miss Humphrey.

"Never mind," cried the children, all except Jane, "we could all see Jane's father then, and anyway we like it sitting on the floor."

"Would you like that?" Miss Humphrey asked Jane's father.

"Oh, I should *twink* so!" he said.

So they took their chairs and put them close together with their backs facing out, and Jane's father sat in the middle of them with his long legs crossed.

"Are you sure that's comfortable, Jane's father?" Miss Humphrey smiled at him.

"Oh, very," said Jane's father, smiling back.
"Now shall I tell you a story?"

"Oh, *would* you?" asked Miss Humphrey.
"Children, how lovely! Jane's father is going to tell us a story!"

All the children folded their hands then and looked up at Jane's father, very quiet and good.

"But, Miss Humphrey," said Jane, "he isn't learning things. Look—his coat is lying on the floor, and he's lost his pencil, and he isn't learning anything at all."

"Shsh, Jane," said Miss Humphrey, "he's going to begin his story. If you can't be a quiet little girl you'll have to go stand in a corner."

"Yes, Jane," said her father.

So all morning Jane's father told the children

and Miss Humphrey stories. And when he'd finished telling them stories he showed them some new games to play. And when it was time to go home all the children and Miss Humphrey said: "Oh, Jane's father, do come again tomorrow morning so you can teach us some more things, won't you please?"

"But, father," said Jane on the way home, "didn't you understand? You weren't supposed to teach. You were supposed to learn."

As soon as they got home Jane's mother wanted to know what had happened at school. And when Jane told her that instead of learning things Jane's father had spent the morning teaching things, she was very much discouraged.

"And didn't you learn to hang up your coat?" she asked.

"No," said Jane, "he didn't."

"And you didn't learn how to write letters so that when you're away you can write one to Jane and me every day?"

"No," said Jane, "he didn't. And he didn't learn how to tell time. He didn't learn anything."

"Well," said Jane's mother, "he'll just have to keep on going to school until he does then."

Jane's father didn't say anything. He took off his tam and his mittens without saying one word. Then he went to his room and took off his short

trousers and put on his long trousers and went down to the office looking just the way he generally did.

But that night he came home very early, and



he went straight to the bathroom and turned on a tub.

"What's the matter, father?" asked Jane.
"This isn't the time to be taking a bath."

"Certainly it is, Jane," he said. "It's time for my bath and my supper."

"Your supper!" said Jane's mother.

"Of course. All the children in our grade have their suppers at six, don't they, Jane?"

"Yes, but—" began Jane.

"Yes but we're going out for dinner," said Jane's mother. "You surely haven't forgotten that we're going out for dinner at seven o'clock? I told you last week."

"No," said Jane's father. "If I go to school with Jane, then I must have a nice bath at five-thirty and my supper at six. And by seven o'clock I'm sound asleep in my bed."

"Oh, father," said Jane.

"And what's more I have to have a dolly to go to sleep with me."

"Oh, father—not Rosy!" cried Jane.

"Yes," said Jane's father, "I think I like Rosy the best."

"Don't cry, Jane," whispered her mother.

Jane ran quickly and got Rosy, who was sitting in Jane's father's hat, and held her tight; and used her petticoat to wipe away her tears with. Rosy always slept with Jane—she *always* did. . . .

By this time Jane's father was ready for his bath.

"When I call you, will you come and help me with my ears?" he asked, and went running and skipping down the hall.

Jane and her mother looked at each other. Whatever should they do?

"Do you know what," said Jane's mother at last. "I think we'd better keep him just the way he is and not try to teach him things."

"And not send him to school any more?" asked Jane.

"And not send him to school any more. And let him do things just the way he wants to do them."

"Eat eggs-in-a-mess if he wants to?"

"Yes, and wobble his head if he wants to."

"And say twink instead of think if he wants to?"

"Yes. Do everything he wants to. Because," Jane's mother said, "he *is* so funny."

"We love him, don't we?" said Jane, and ran to tell him so.

She banged on the bathroom door.

"We love you, father," she shouted.

"That's *n*wice," said Jane's father.





